

August 13, 1970

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[redacted]  
Special Assistant to the Director of Personnel  
211 Magazine Building

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Subject: Comments of [redacted] on summer intern program

Your memorandum for summer interns, [redacted] reminds me of college examination questions--brief enough to be ambiguous and long enough to give me room to hang myself. Hence, in being "informal" my comments will range from comments on the agency and the intern program to intra-office relations. I hope, moreover, that the undertaking ultimately does not fall stillborn from the typewriter.

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Housing, of course, was the first problem and I suppose that in the end it has to be solved by each intern. It might be helpful, however, if interns had some way of communicating with each other at the end of the school year or immediately upon arriving in Washington to secure housing together. I had noticed some houses for rent for the summer which three or four people could rent, but which one person could not possibly afford to rent.

Looking back over the summer I regret not being able to spend more time informally conversing with other interns. To a great extent I suppose this was due to the isolation of the Rosslyn contingency. Briefings generally were scheduled such that there was little time before or after to talk. I did find the exchange of opinions and experiences valuable and enlightening in evaluating my summer with FBIS.

In the last few weeks I suspect that I saw more of the agency, directors, and deputy directors than some people in my office, but I now find that I am much more aware of the organization and activities of the agency in general than I am of FBIS.

Speaking of organization, probably the most etherizing aspect of the summer briefings was a seemingly endless proclivity for organizational charts and abbreviations. While they were important in terms of acquiring a general view of who does what, when, and where the time devoted to such explanations seemed to be over-emphasized. I found the National Security Act of 1947 to be the Little Red Book or Arc of Covenant of the agency. Nearly every briefing began with venerable references to it such that by early August I felt as though I had been with Harry Truman when he signed the act into law.

Finally, I think that it is deplorable that there should be so many single women at headquarters and such a dearth of women in the Key Building. It is definitely bad for the morale of single interns and it seems that there should be some type of financial compensation for this distressing deficiency in the physical facilities in Rosslyn.

Lest I be accused of being pessimistic and cynical rest assured that the rest of my comments are related to the positive and impressive aspects of the summer program.

My comments could be summarized into two words: very impressive. I was impressed and even amazed at the extent to which the agency was willing to expose us to various departments of the agency. Although I am not one to be impressed by accumulated degrees I was impressed by the people who conducted our briefings, especially Mr. Knocke and [redacted]. Their ability to be intellectually honest, articulate, and informed impressed me more than all the sophisticated hardware we were shown. They did more to dispel the idea that government service is the realm of the faceless, non-think bureaucrat than any of the tours.

As early as my second interview with the agency last spring I was impressed by the spirit of professionalism and skill that I encountered in FBIS. There is little evidence to support the "bureaucratic flunky" syndrome here. In brief conversations with other interns I think that my encounters and experiences here in FBIS might be above average compared to the experiences they have related to me.

I have dwelt at some length upon personalities and human relations and skills. This is because I ultimately value excellence and harmony more in this area than in the so-called area of modern hardware. The briefings and "peeps" we have been given into the machinery of the agency have been both awesome and informative. But from the standpoint of future employment with the agency the quality of personnel was a much more important factor. Regretably we have not been able to explore agency attitudes and policies regarding personnel after a summer of experience. Perhaps our meeting with Mr. Wattles will be illuminating in regard to this. To be more precise, I must be challenged intellectually by my job and need to encounter people (perhaps this is the naive idealism of a college boy, but I would like to say that I at least started a career with high aspirations). I have doubts that as an isolated "technician" I can achieve that. Hence I aspire to "go up," but that aspiration is neither predicated upon inordinate ambition nor ruthless desire for position. My years in Taiwan have made me a thorough Confucian and Taoist--I want to be of service where there are the opportunities to excel and demonstrate capability without the necessity of being obnoxiously ambitious. This summer in the agency has not significantly reassured me yet that there is such an opportunity here. I and others have come away with the distinct impression that, in regard to our queries about promotions,

etc., this is a realm where rather hazy assurance has been given and certainly not with the same gusto and fanfare that other areas of the agency have been merchandized. I have the squeemish feeling that to discuss this sort of thing in view of the civil service system and regulated, periodic promotions is tantamount to manifesting pernicious and unhealthy Machiavellian tendencies. I am aware that the "business world" may be more tolerant of ambitious interlopers who are insensitive to people and traditions as they climb over or upon other people. But I should also expect to find a more solicitous and warm reception to the potential careerist who wishes to be not only a skilled specialist, but also an articulate and informed manager. I tend to think that the truly skilled and talented people coming out of colleges today are concerned about not only money, but also the opportunity to make creative contributions.

In conclusion, I have been impressed and at the same time I think that I have stated also what has distressed me. If public relations were one of the goals of this summer program then I think that you have succeeded. I have already recommended the intern program to two friends in Korean Studies and one in Chinese Studies and also to the Asian Studies Department at Brigham Young University. Correspondence with faculty members at Brown has changed some of their attitudes toward this summer program although I doubt that the political science and Asian history departments will imminently rush into Lyman Kirkpatrick's office at Brown and acknowledge their errors.

Judging from conversations with a few (very few) interns in other federal agencies the responsibilities assigned to me were far more demanding and responsible than those given interns in other agencies.

A final word of commendation must be given to the FBIS people in my office and on this floor of the Key building. They have befriended me and have accepted me as a regular employee even to the point that my allegiance was greatly coveted in the intra-office Mongolian-Old China Hand bourgeois struggle.

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